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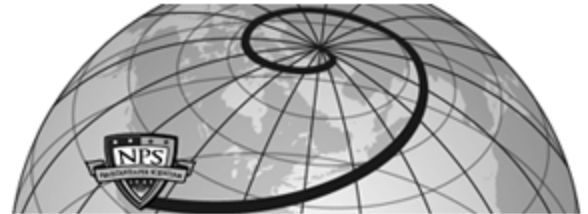
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A STUDY OF THE NAVY OFFICER FITNESS REPORT
FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING A
PREPARATION MANUAL

THOMAS J. BOWEN

A STUDY OF THE NAVY OFFICER FITNESS REPORT

FOR THE PURPOSE OF DEVELOPING A PREPARATION MANUAL

ABSTRACT

This research paper is an investigation into the realm of perform-
ance appraisal and leadership evaluation. The purpose of this
endeavor is to uncover some basic guidelines which will form a
foundation for the development of a manual for the preparation of
Reports on the Fitness of Officers (NAVPERS 310). The motivation
for this study is the student-author's belief that a vacuum has long
existed in the Navy for this type of an approach to the performance
evaluation dilemma.

There have been myriad studies, searching articles and papers
devoted to techniques and methods for improving the content of the
fitness report. Almost every naval officer seems to have an answer
for a new and better format. The position taken in this study is
that the current fitness report form (the 1962 revision) is quite ade-
quate to fulfill its designed purpose. What is needed is a BUPERS
originated manual to educate the thousands of Navy rating officers
on how to use the form.

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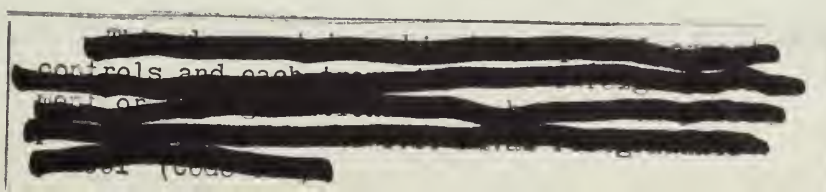
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A Research Paper

Presented to

the Faculty of the Navy Management School

U. S. Naval Postgraduate School

* * * * *

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science in Management

* * * * *

By

Thomas J. Bowen, LCDR, USN

April 1962

INTRODUCTION

Beginning with the birth of recorded history evidence exists that men and groups of men have appraised and evaluated leadership qualities of other men in order to select statesmen and leaders. These chosen leaders have created empires, risen to greatness, led other men in victorious battle, effected great works, or accomplished little during their reign.

The definitive qualities of leadership are somewhat elusive. The philosophers of the past Aristotle, Plato, Montaigne, and others have attempted to define the characteristics of leadership. The sociologists and psychologists of today continue to search for and classify the traits that mark the great men among men. The task is to determine what combination of human attributes enable one man to rise above the level of another, to lead others rather than to be led.

The complete equation of human nature has yet to be solved. No exact laws, like those governing the physical sciences, guide the endeavors of the social scientist. With nearly three billion human beings in the world, no two are exactly alike; intelligence, environment, external forces, race and creed, all act upon the human equation and complicate a solution. However, all is not fiction in the search for the mysterious qualities of leadership.

Many works of renowned scholars and military geniuses are exhaustive studies of the nature of men and abound with information. Therein one discovers the familiar outward and inward quality word descriptions employed in the composition of military fitness reports of today. There have also been many additional articles and books written in this century concerning the character of men and what seems to make one lead and another follow. Progress has been made and one day, in the dimension of time, someone may devise an accurate composite answer to the complex equation of human nature.

THE PROBLEM

It is the purpose of this paper to: (1) develop the basic guidelines for a manual to be used in the preparation of naval officer fitness reports; (2) provide a list of terms that will assist an officer to discriminate between leadership qualities of his subordinate officers; and (3) provide a list of positive and passive character traits to assist in the analysis of personalities of subordinate officers.

IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDY

Since the year 1818, the Navy Officer fitness report has been revised 49 times. The two basic reasons for change to the form of the report have been to force the reporting officers to be more objective in their appraisals of subordinates, and to reduce the tendency to give the same rating in all categories.

The current fitness report is the resultant of the combined effort of many dedicated and sincere officers who have served in the Bureau of Naval Personnel. These men fully realize the importance of the report as a major controlling device in the career patterns and promotions of their contemporaries. It is the firm conviction of this student that the manifold complaints currently voiced about the fitness report should not be directed at the originators of the document but at the reporting officers.

In the search for facts in this study no trace was found concerning the existence of a guide for the preparation of fitness reports. It is hoped that this endeavor will stimulate further thought in the Bureau of Naval Personnel and ultimately lead to the development of an adroitly conceived manual for use throughout the naval service.

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CHAPTER I - BACKGROUND

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Historically, as well as in the present era, numerous persons have been judging and discussing leadership qualities of other men. History is filled with the exploits and deeds of great men. Perhaps if Neanderthal man had mastered some method of writing or inscription, the paleolithic period might also have produced descriptive data on leaders in primitive societies.

LITERATURE ON QUALITIES OF LEADERSHIP

The first recorded evidence that men began to definitively study leadership is in the works of history's accepted great philosophers. Plato, founder of the Academy of Athens, 387 B.C., devoted entire dialogues to leadership subjects. One of his works, "Laches," is an interesting and exhaustive discussion of courage.[1] Aristotle concluded in one of his writings that courage was one essential characteristic of leaders and discussed the term, in part, as follows:

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[1]Benjamin Jowett, The Dialogues of Plato (Vol. 7 of Great Books of the Western World, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins. 54 vols.; Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1952), pp. 26-37.

> Though courage is concerned with feelings of
> confidence and of fear, it is not concerned with
> both alike, but more with the things that inspire
> fear; for he who is undisturbed in face of these
> and bears himself as he should towards these is
> more truly brave than the man who does so towards
> the things that inspire confidence. It is for facing
> what is painful, then as has been said, that men
> are called brave.[2]

A great deal of other evidence exists that the ancient scholars were very interested in studying leadership virtues and other qualities of the professional soldier. Plutarch devoted many treatises to the study of the lives of real and imaginary leaders in Roman history, discussing their courage, true prudence, lion-likeness of temper, freedom of passion, constancy, and firmness.

Michel de Montaigne, the renowned French author and scholar, published a series of philosophical essays concerning many factors of life, virtue, and ethics. Of valour, Montaigne wrote:

> The estimate and value of a man consist in the
> heart and in the will; there his true honour lies.
> Valour is stability, not of legs and arms, but of
> the courage and the soul.[3]

Down through the centuries the scholars and philosophers

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[2]W.D. Ross, The Works of Aristotle (Vol. 9 of Great Books of the Western World, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins. 54 vols.; Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1952), p. 363.

[3]Charles Cotton, The Essays of Michel Eyquem de Montaigne (Vol. 25 of Great Books of the Western World, ed. Robert Maynard Hutchins. 54 vols.; Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1952), p.96.

continued to study and to discuss the great leaders of their times. Their attempts to define the qualities that distinguish the leader gradually developed a large mass of literature, all of it valuable and contributing to a broad general background knowledge of the subject, but lacking direction and cohesiveness. Stated in another manner, the student having perused the works of Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Plutarch, Montaigne, and others, may grasp a hazy historical perspective of leadership qualities, but experiences difficulty in evaluating and mentally integrating so many diverse and scattered viewpoints.

In this century, and primarily during the last thirty years, sociologists and psychologists have become increasingly interested in applying their growing knowledge of human science to the study of leadership. The state of the art is still very fluid, but the important point to consider is that men are now attempting to study and evaluate other men scientifically and objectively, not philosophically.

Current conclusions of some eminent sociologists are that leadership is a term that has to be applied to a relationship between a certain individual within a group and the other members of a group; the term cannot be equated to an individual alone. In the study of leaders, the scientists are trying to answer objectively such ques-

tions as: "how does one measure leadership?" and/or "how do you discover a leader in a group situation?"[4] These, or similar questions, are the ones that Navy rating officers have been attempting to answer for many years by intuition, observation, and common sense.

The three military services, American industry, and many universities are vitally interested in the evolving study of leadership evaluation because everyone desires to foster and promote the best men in his organization. As an example, there is a leadership study group in being at Ohio State University. The Military Academy at West Point has an office of Military Psychology and Leadership devoting its effort to the study of leadership and administering an "Aptitude for the Service" merit rating and evaluation program. The U. S. Naval Academy tested a system similar to that of the Military Academy from 1949 through 1955. The Air Force and Army both have engaged in experimental group behavior studies at various times to further their research. As an illustration of industry's interest in executive evaluation, the Foundation for Research on Human Behavior (an industry sponsored group) convened two seminars in the

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[4]C. G. Browne and Thomas S. Cohn, The Study of Leadership (Danville: The Interstate Printers and Publishers, Inc., 1958), p. iii.

spring of 1957 to discuss the latest developments in assessing

managerial potential. In the introduction of the report on this semi-

nar it is stated that, "Selection of the best potential managerial per-

sonnel available, their placement and optimum development are major

goals of management today."[5]

The extensive scientific effort and study now being directed to-

ward the elusive structure of leadership is of the utmost importance

to the welfare of the United States. The increasing complexity of

human society and international relations the world over places

mounting demands upon the energy and abilities of our chosen states-

men and military leaders. It is therefore essential that the criteria

for evaluation of leadership qualities be continually refined and im-

proved so that the men who should rise to positions of authority be

given full opportunity to do so.

The basic purpose of this short chapter on the historical devel-

opment of leadership evaluation is to point out that many great minds

have been and are involved in the field. The volumes that have been

generated in the study of leadership would fill several city libraries.

Indeed, a simple listing of the authors who have delved into the

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[5] The Foundation for Research on Human Behavior, Assessing
Managerial Potential, A Report Prepared by the Seminar on Assessing
Managerial Potential (Ann Arbor: Graphic Services, 1958), p. 1.

subject would constitute a large reference book.

Although this study is not one on leadership, it is believed that at least a short review of the history of the subject is necessary in order to broadly define the problem area. In this era, leadership evaluation is being attacked from all sides with a scientific approach. A great deal of useable factual information is evolving, and it is the purpose of this study to correlate a part of it for practical use in preparing naval officer fitness reports.

CHAPTER II - EVALUATION

THE LOGIC OF FITNESS REPORTS

The Navy fitness report is not a unique and obscure administrative instrument. On the contrary, the report format in use today is the resultant of years of painstaking research and development within the Bureau of Naval Personnel. Performance evaluation, in one form or another, is universally accepted in all progressive nations of the world, and no more ingenious single device has yet been conceived than the fitness report for judging leadership capacity and work performance.

Generally, there is an opposing school of thought to the concept of fitness reports. Those persons who align themselves with this group argue that a performance evaluation report is, by its very nature, too subjective and composed of too many indefinable terms. Their reasoning usually takes the tack that the capacity to learn new skills, adjust to new tasks, and the ability to perform assigned duties can only be accurately measured by performance, psychological, aptitude, and intelligence tests. The Bureau of Naval Personnel, in one of its recent reports, points out that the

"state of the art" in this level of scientific advancement has not

been reached and that:

> Some aspects of human behavior such as human
> motivation and personality are difficult to define
> and study. There is thus relatively little knowledge
> of or experience with such traits that could be readily
> applied, without further elaborate study, to practical
> situations such as we encounter in the Navy.[1]

At this point in time in the development of social psychology, most

authorities agree that there are no acceptable substitutes for fitness

reports for appraising one's performance on the job.

For several decades Navy Regulations have contained the follow-

ing terse statement:

> Reports of Fitness are decisive in the service
> career of the individual officer, and have an import-
> ant influence on the efficiency of the entire service.

In the large Navy organization of today this statement takes on added

emphasis. Evaluation data is used for promotion, augmentation

boards, detailing assignments, and selecting officer students for

postgraduate and service schools. It is imperative that the perform-

ance data flowing into the Navy Department be as complete, factual,

and objective as it is humanly possible to make it. Properly used,

the present format will accomplish these ends.

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[1]The Use of Navy Tests, A Memorandum Prepared by the
Personnel Research Division of the Bureau of Naval Personnel
(Washington: BUPERS Printing Office, 1959), pp. 2-3.

METHODS OF EVALUATION

As the result of the extensive research being devoted to per-
formance appraisal throughout the United States, several methods
have evolved and are being used in varying degree. At this juncture
it is perhaps appropriate to outline the more popular types of perform-
ance evaluation in current use:

(1) Rating Scale - This is the type of performance rating where-
in the officer is evaluated against a standard rather than being com-
pared with other individuals. The rating scale is a series of factors
which are to be considered and the rating officer is not forced to
select a given response. Instead, the rater may choose any point
along a continuum as the rating degree.[2] Figure 2-1 is a brief illus-
tration of the rating scale format. This method is the most widely
used today and, within the military services and industry, the factors
used in the scale vary a great deal. One periodical, The Personnel
Journal Magazine, recently reported that, "When 18 different chart-
forms were gathered from 18 companies using this kind of plan, a
total of 35 different characteristics were included."[3] Normally, the

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[2]Rossall J. Johnson, Personnel and Industrial Relations
(Homewood: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1960), p. 147.

[3]Joseph Tiffin, "6 Merit Rating Systems," The Personnel Journal,
37:288, January, 1959.

Figure 2-1

Officer Rating Scale

	Not Observed	1 out of 100	Exceptional	Superior	Excellent	Acceptable	Marginal	Unsatisfactory
Professional Knowledge				X				
Moral Courage			X					
Loyalty					X			
Force					X			
Initiative				X				
Industry					X			
Imagination			X					
Judgment			X					
Reliability					X			

rating factors are chosen for their applicability to the organization concerned.

(2) Ranking - This technique is the easiest type to use because the rating officer simply ranks officers from top to bottom. A group of officers may be separated into grade increments, but the system of ranking those within grade is the same. This method of evaluation, by itself, has a serious drawback in that it is not always clear to the rating officer just what he is using for his basis of evaluation.[4] The ranking method tends to be too personal and subjective.

(3) Paired-Comparison - This method is similar in some ways to the ranking system in that officers in a unit are compared with others in the same unit. Each person is compared with one other, rated, and then compared with another and so on until each officer is compared with all others in the unit. Tallying up the comparisons will then produce a rank order of each individual.[5] Again, as in the ranking method, the basis for evaluation may be vague in the rater's mind unless he has preselected several factors upon which to base his comparisons.

(4) Forced-Choice - This method of evaluation was developed by an Army research group during World War II.[6] The rating

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[4]Johnson, op. cit., p. 145.
[5]Johnson, op.cit., pp. 145-146.
[6]Tiffin, op. cit., p. 290.

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officer is given a rating sheet with a series of statements grouped

by fours. Two of the statements are made to be obviously favorable

and two unfavorable. The rater is forced to check the statement

which most nearly describes the officer and selects the statement

which is the least descriptive even though some statements do not

appear to apply to a particular person.[7] The key to the rating form

is kept secret from the rating officers. This method of evaluation

has not been widely adopted because of the expense in constructing

the form, the name of Forced-Choice is immediately unpopular, and

it is difficult to keep the grading key secret. Figure 2-2 illustrates

this type of rating procedure.

Figure 2-2

Forced-Choice Statements

1. Usually stands his watches properly.

2. Seldom makes mistakes in judgment.

3. Must occasionally be cautioned to maintain a taut bridge watch.

4. Experiences some difficulty in station-keeping.

(5) Critical Incidents - This system of evaluation was de-

veloped through Air Force research during World War II. The plan for

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[7]Johnson, op. cit., p. 146.

rating by critical incidents is constructed by determining, from extensive interviews with officers on the job, things actually observed by them of something that is considered critical to the success or failure of a task. The rater is trained to keep a record of favorable or unfavorable critical incidents or critical behavior, usually on a daily basis. The rating of a person is then made from a compilation of such incidents.[8] The strength of this method is in the fact that the rating is based upon observed and daily recorded incidents rather than upon uncertain memory at the end of the rating period.

The current Report on the Fitness of Officers (NAVPERS 310) is a combination of the five evaluation methods previously outlined. Section fourteen (14) is a combined ranking and rating scale. The rating officer selects a point along a continuum for the ratee, mentally comparing him against a standard of other officers whom the rating officer has previously observed. Section fifteen (15) is similarly constructed. Section sixteen (16) is the ranking method with overtones of the forced-choice type superimposed. In this section it is desired that the rating officer consider the whole personality, capabilities, and defects (if any) of the ratee, and indicate preference for serving with him again. Section twenty (20) is similar to

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[8]Tiffin, op. cit., p. 290.

fourteen (14), a ranking and rating scale. The critical incident aspect is interjected into the whole document. It is desired that the overall judgment of a subordinate be based upon factual and repeated observations rather than vague memory and personal preference at the end of a reporting period.

SOURCES OF ERROR IN PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

The basic and inherent source of error in current forms of fitness reports emanates from the fact that they are based upon inexact criteria. As previously postulated, the Gordian knot of leadership continues to defy final definition and, as yet, no two authorities have reached complete agreement upon the ideal solution. In comparison, however, it might be noted that the study of psychology or economics is today not an exact science, but few will argue that all empirical data derived therefrom is not useable. Analogous to these fields of endeavor, the study of leadership has also produced a large body of useable knowledge, and it is upon this derived foundation that evaluation methods and forms are now constructed.

It is generally considered that the inherent source of error is not the major element which significantly affects the validity of fitness reports; there are other factors that do so. Within the limits of human fallibility, the Report on the Fitness of Officers (NAVPERS 310) has always been designed to encourage objective appraisals by

rating officers. However, reports of the past have not been objective, as a whole, and this problem has been the primary stimulus for periodic changes to the format. Contrary to reasonable expectations and the law of variability in nature, the greater percentage of individual reports have bordered on an average rating of superior and above (in 1954 revision this would equate to excellent and above). This particular point at issue has continued to plague promotion boards and detailing officers and, paradoxically, it is within this fertile problem area that the most useable and valuable data has evolved from leadership studies.

It was previously hypothesized that no two persons completely agree upon a definition of leadership. If this assumption is accepted as being sound, it may also be assumed that no two rating officers will evaluate the work performance and leadership potential of a subordinate in the same manner, even under controlled conditions. Actually, this point need not be belabored because nearly everyone has encountered the "harsh," "average," and "lenient" rating officer. The important facet to be explored in this area is that industry and the military services have discovered that the natural differential among rating officers can be effectively narrowed down through education and discussion of known error sources.[9]

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[9]Michael J. Jucius, *Personnel Management* (Homewood: Richard D. Irwin, Inc., 1959), pp. 292-294.

It would be well to explore briefly the normal pitfalls that have been found to distort the validity of performance ratings:

(1) The Halo Effect - This is the tendency of rating officers to rate other factors in a report the same as some one factor about an individual with which they were/are particularly impressed, favorably or unfavorably.[10] The "halo" effect results in a slanted report because, instead of marks for individual traits, the whole document is but a repetition of one factor, possibly a minor one.

(2) The Central Tendency - A bias introduced into a report when a rating officer assumes that all of his subordinates should be grouped around an average, consciously or unconsciously determined by him. Coupled with the "halo" effect, this error results in a more meaningless report.

(3) High-level Tendency - It is often found that raters have an inclination to rank men in high-level jobs consistently higher than those occupying lower-level positions.[11] In addition, years of service or age will affect the rating. Men in their twenties are often rated lower than men in their thirties while men in their sixties receive lower ratings than anyone else for some reason.[12] In the Navy

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[10]Jucius, op.cit., p. 289.
[11]Tiffin, op. cit., p. 289.
[12]Johnson, op. cit., p. 151.

there is a tendency to rate Ensigns lower than Lieutenants and so on

up the line. This problem has been found to be prevalent in indus-

trial organizations as well as in the military services. On the whole,

the more senior the rank or prestige of a job, the higher the average

fitness report becomes until a certain age level is reached and then

the process is thrown into reverse. Some fator other than performance

and leadership ability is being interjected into the report, and it

would appear that it is a comparison-carryover from one rank to

another; Ensign versus Lieutenant, Executive Officer versus Head of

Department.

(4) The Staff Factor - Officers serving on a large staff are

sometimes exposed to a somewhat unique hazard in their performance

of duty. Usually, the rough-draft of a fitness report is filled in by

their immediate superior, reviewed up the line, worked up in final

form and then signed by the officer in command. It has been noted

that the system may vary a bit within different staffs, but no serious

errors are introduced by following this procedure of processing a re-

port. The staff officer is evaluated primarily by his immediate super-

ior in a routine manner. The "staff factor" is introduced at the point

in time when the immediate superior is relieved and another takes

over. Now, the staff officer's report will be composed by an entirely

different personality, but the finished version is signed by the same

officer in command. An exceptional officer who has been producing "outstanding" work in the opinion of one superior may be evaluated in the overall "excellent" category by the relief. Unless a notation is made in the report to the effect that a change in basic rating officers has occurred, the succeeding reports will indicate (erroneously) a lessening effort on the part of the ratee. If a change is not reflected, how can a promotion board properly evaluate the important "apparent" change in performance?

(5) The Semantics error - Communication is defined in Webster's dictionary as, "Intercourse by words, letters, or messages; interchange of thoughts or opinions." To a naval officer the word may also be interpreted to mean semaphore, radio telephone or yardarm blinker. The image that the word "communication" creates in one's mind depends upon its use; of and by itself, it has many connotations. As used in this discussion, communication refers to the definition given by Webster which essentially means the sharing of information through the use of words.

In the last few decades there has been a growing awareness by educators, industry, and government of the need for vastly improved communication techniques in all walks of life. Many studies have been and are being conducted in this sphere of social science. From

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this awakening process a field of specialized study has grown up which has been dubbed "semantics." Semantics is concerned with a study of the meaning of symbols used in communication and with the effect of symbols upon the minds and actions of people.[13] The symbols used in fitness reports are plain old time-worn "words."

As illustrated in the first paragraph, the image that a word creates in the mind of one person may be interpreted in an entirely different way by another recipient, and it may be completely out of phase with the intent of the original communicator. The difficulty that arises in the use of words is that they seldom have a single interpretation. As another example, take the word "impressive." A rating officer may desire to employ this word in the description of particular strengths of a given officer in the "comments" section of the fitness report. But the word "impressive" does not convey a clear-cut image to everyone who scans it; unless it is supported and/or defined in a statement, it may be interpreted by one reader to mean "commanding" and by another "imposing." These last two words, in turn, do not convey a clear image to all. Thus, we have the problem of semantics to contend with. How does one project the word picture of his subordinate to others so that it is a true

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[13]Jucius, op. cit., p. 371.

reflection of the image in his own mind? Most authorities are of

the opinion that improved communication is basically a problem to

be solved by the use of continuing education. In a practical sense,

the naval officer has to educate himself and improve his vocabulary

by experience with words, living with great books, and becoming

familiar with words.

The 1962 revision of the fitness report has as one objective

the reduction in the amount of writing required of reporting seniors

in evaluating subordinates. Paragraph seventeen (17) of the old

form caused the rating officer to grapple with the problem of seman-

tics in an attempt to blend its wording with the marks assigned in

other paragraphs. Many times these efforts were extremely painful

and not at all satisfactory, frequently resulting in abrupt and con-

flicting statements. The new form greatly reduces this hazard and

relegates the word description to a position of non-conflict with the

graphic sections of the report. No longer is a rating officer requir-

ed to justify a conscientious attempt at an objective appraisal in

several sections with a somewhat subjective explanation in another.

In addition to this basic change, the new form contains more con-

cise statements opposite each of the character traits in the "leader-

ship" block. This improvement should stimulate more objective

appraisals and minimize the semantics problem.

In summary it can be concluded that some form of performance appraisal and leadership evaluation is necessary within an organization. This is so in order to ensure promotion of those men possessing leadership qualities versus those who do not, or of lesser degree. The most widely used single device in use today is generally of a form similar to that of the Navy fitness report for officers. A precautionary note must be added, however, that the nature of the report makes it vulnerable to human errors which distort its validity, and against which rating officers must continuously guard.

CHAPTER III - RECOMMENDATIONS

Up to the present stage, the approach has been to moderately peruse the historical development of leadership research and study, the current methods of performance appraisal in use, and the types of human error that creep into performance evaluation. In large part, the astute studies of prominent authors in the personnel management field have been carefully examined to provide substance and a valid back-drop for this final section.

The fundamental motive which forms the foundation for the concept of this study is my belief that a vacuum has long existed in the Navy for this type of an approach to the performance evaluation dilemma. There have been myriad studies, searching articles and papers devoted to techniques and methods for improving the content of the fitness report. Almost everyone seems to have an answer for a new and better format. Down through the years, the U. S. Naval Institute Proceedings magazine has contained many articles with "the solution" to performance appraisal and evaluation of leadership qualities. The position taken in this discussion is that the current fitness report is "good enough" to fulfill its designed purpose; it is

"the answer."

As stated before, the fitness report has been revised to strengthen its objective base and to counter the recurrent human errors of bias and subjectivity. Without doubt the idea must have been considered in the Bureau of Naval Personnel to produce a manual for use as a guide (not a crutch) in the preparation of reports. There are other numerous manuals in use throughout the Navy, composed with varying degrees of skill, which serve as valuable references in many complex fields. Perhaps the fitness report area has been considered to be too sensitive to approach from this tack. Possibly this domain is thought to be too ethereal and nebulous to permit of definitive treatment in manual form. Whatever the case may be, it is submitted that a problem has continued to exist in spite of the periodic changes in format and that future modifications are not an answer. Changing the document will not alter the basic human error source. Perhaps a skillfully designed guide-manual which blends with, interprets and supplements the fitness report form is a partial answer to the corrigenda.[1]

The stated purpose of this paper is to develop the basic guidelines for a manual to be used in the preparation of naval officer

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[1] corringenda [L] Things to be corrected; a list of errors.

fitness reports. The first two chapters and this portion of the third have been devoted to constructing a foundation upon which to base some specific recommendations and to support my hypothesis that a manual is necessary. The remaining sections are directed toward developing the essence of the manual.

THIS IS WHAT IS NEEDED

It is postulated that the Navy has a need for A Manual for the Preparation of Naval Officer Fitness Reports, which should contain (at least) the following data:

(1) An historic treatment of the developments in leadership studies and the evolution of performance evaluation, including an abridged version of the story of the Navy Fitness Report.[2]

(2) A section relating to the use of fitness reports in the Navy Department, stressing their overall importance.

(3) A concise discussion of the "pitfalls" that lie in the paths of rating officers -- the "halo effect," et id genus omne.[3]

(4) A list of terms that will assist the rating officer to discriminate between leadership qualities of his subordinate officers.

(5) An exhaustive compilation of "Minor Weaknesses."

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[2]Research Report 56-2 (NAVPERS 18494), Bureau of Naval Personnel, April 1956.

[3]et id genus omne [L] And everything of the sort.

This is a new section added to the 1962 revision of the report form which should be clarified to prevent ambiguous interpretation. A sampling of student-officers at the Navy Management School reveals a wide variety of opinions concerning what constitutes a minor weakness.

(6) A list of positive and negative character traits to assist in the analysis of personalities of subordinates.

(7) A complete discussion of each term used in the "Leadership" section of the fitness report to amplify the more concise definitions given on the form.

UNDERSTANDING AND USING WORDS

The words and explanations that follow represent one method of approach to be considered in developing part of the manual. Roget's Thesaurus and several texts on personality, leadership and social psychology have been studied to compile this data. This section mirrors the effort of but one student. Utilizing the research capabilities in the Bureau of Naval Personnel, a much more useable product would be obtained from the aggregate work of specialists in the fields of sociology and descriptive composition.

(1) <u>Individuality</u> - This is an outward personal quality which labels the dominant impression an individual makes upon another; A distinctive characteristic that sets one person off from another. Or,

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to quote an authority:

> Degrees of individuality occur in the slight differences in the ways the particular person projects in action and words the cultural values which he and the majority have introjected. In this we see that general principles applying to personality within a culture are possible, yet each personality remains in some way unique.[4]

INDIVIDUALITY

demanding	bright	dynamic	magnetic
obsequious	offensive	disdainful	inconsiderate
crude	obtrusive	brusque	curt
courteous	amiable	engaging	well-mannered
frigid	affected	cold	blunt
affable	alert	urbane	diplomatic
tranquil	composed	calm	mild
shy	aloof	austere	unresponsive
likeable	pleasing	suave	pleasant
verbose	loquacious	boisterous	warm
taciturn	unobtrusive	retiring	restrained
sedate	animated	serene	talkative
conciliatory	considerate	convincing	easy
benign	polished	bland	frank
kindly	genial	gracious	receptive

[4]Charles M. Harsh and H.G. Schrickel, Personality Development and Assessment. (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1950), pp. 346-347.

(2) <u>Disposition</u> <u>or</u> <u>Temperament</u> - This is the characteristic wherein the individual is revealed as being prone to certain feelings, desires and moods. This is an outward quality which indicates possession of certain inward mental or emotional traits. Under varying conditions, a person possessing one or several of these qualities may be perceived in a favorable or unfavorable way. One should not automatically conclude that a person always outwardly reflects his dominant inner temperament. A man may be inwardly weak, conceited, and fault-finding but manifest entirely different outward qualities to his superiors under normal circumstances. Place him under pressure and often the facade falls away revealing the inner true self. Conversely, another person may be characterized as retiring or morose, subject to occasional irritable moods, and yet he may be absolutely unshakeable under trying conditions, giving manifest evidence of tremendous moral courage.

In short, a person may be entirely different "inside" from the person suggested by his outward behavior. This is a difficult quality to evaluate and it requires that the rating officer repeatedly observe subordinates under many conditions.

Why do we attempt to measure temperament and reflect this characteristic in a fitness report? Why is this section included in the discussion? The section on the fitness report under the heading

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of "Leadership" contains an item on "Personal Behavior" (His de-

meanor, disposition and sobriety). A true measurement of tempera-

ment is desired because as one authority has aptly stated it:

> First, a poorly integrated personality (poor general
> adjustment) may have trouble adjusting in any training
> or work situation and should either be screened out or
> given professional assistance in solving his emotional
> problems. Second, a person with traits which are likely
> to make for adjustment difficulties in certain types of
> positions may be placed in a situation which is so
> structured as to turn his liabilities into assets or at
> least minimize the chances of difficulty.[5]

DISPOSITION OR TEMPERAMENT

serious	evasive	indifferent	retiring
gullible	spiritless	insipid	submissive
animated	impulsive	impetuous	spirited
humorous	cheerful	excitable	good-humored
gloomy	morose	meek	pessimistic
impotent	conceited	irritating	obstructionist
helpful	generous	good-tempered	good-natured
adaptable	cooperative	tactful	forebearing
supercilious	hypercritical	complaining	ill-tempered
truculent	fault-finding	resentful	effeminate
lenient	indulgent	quiet	complaisant
phlegmatic	mild	placid	inebriate

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[5]Donald E. Super, Appraising Vocational Fitness (New York:
Harper and Brothers, 1949), p. 485.

(3) <u>Character</u> - This is the moral fibre or the inner core of a man. As one author has stated it:

> Before becoming intimately friendly with anyone, we usually scrutinize with great care the "principles" he "stands for," whether he is sincere and honest with others and with himself, what he has set as his life goals and in what manner he hopes to achieve these. Such matters involve a man's moral standards, what he accepts as truth and denies as falsehood, his basic attitudes toward his fellowmen and the world beyond; in short, a man's philosophy of life.[6]

Moral courage, reliability, and personal behavior all emanate from a man's basic character. Too much care cannot be exercised in describing a man's character.

CHARACTER

cautious	magnanimous	open-minded	stable
opinionated	resolute	trustworthy	shallow
steady	unsteady	self-sacrificing	venturesome
hypercritical	unstable	audacious	flaccid
fickle	untrustworthy	weak	unswerving
dominant	idealistic	faithful	loyal
bigoted	just	firm	irresolute
tenacious	altruistic	disloyal	thoughtful
earnest	courageous	dependent	bold
intolerant	unbiased	dominating	superficial

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[6]Charles M. Harsh and H. G. Schrickel, <u>op</u>. <u>cit</u>., p. 7.

(4) <u>Intellectual</u> <u>Faculties</u> - What type of mentality does a man have? What is his ability to use it? Herein one is evaluating a subordinate's imagination and his general aptitude for handling novel situations, and not his intelligence quotient.

INTELLECTUAL FACULTIES

formalist	practical	theoretical	academic
inane	stupid	unwise	obtuse
creative	original	independent	imaginative
average	medium	ordinary	normal
one-track	third-rate	dull	impractical
brilliant	astute	perspicacious	analytical
inept	mediocre	unimaginative	undistinguished
versatile	judicial	keen	able
ingenious	calculating	bright	clever
sound	sharp	logical	agile-minded
discerning	quick-thinker	careful	quick-witted

(5) <u>Knowledge</u> - Is the amount of subject matter a person has acquired by natural processes and involves the cooperation of the senses with reason. This quality is not to be confused with nor mistaken for wisdom or intelligence. A person does not have to be

brilliant to have acquired a vast storehouse of knowledge.

KNOWLEDGE

unlettered	shallow	learned	crass
ignorant	thick	unscholarly	uninformed
widely-read	well-read	intellectual	accomplished
scholarly	lettered	smatterer	cultivated
informed	erudite	enlightened	unlearned
half-scholar	dabbler	unconversant	unerudite

(6) Industry – This is an emotional quality which is the manifestation of many factors in a person's overall personality. The term refers to the manner in which a person applies himself to and performs his assigned duties. Minor weaknesses have a tendency to show up in this category as well as in the following one on "Self-Expression."

INDUSTRY

resourceful	meticulous	willing	steady
lazy	negligent	zealous	procrastinating
painstaking	deliberate	punctilious	methodical
energetic	enthusiastic	quick	rapid
determined	thorough	industrious	precise
diligent	persistent	tireless	untiring

INDUSTRY (continued)

| vacillating | sluggish | indifferent | intermittent |
| slow | careless | casual | unresourceful |

(7) Self-Expression - When self expression is being evaluated, one is in reality appraising a subordinate's skill in grammar, rhetoric, and logic. How effective is the subordinate in getting his point across to others?

SELF-EXPRESSION

accurate	capable	reliable	ordinary
unsatisfactory	passable	ineffectual	presentable
unreliable	tolerable	questionable	commonplace
fair	good	sure	excellent
effectual	efficient	decisive	successful
dependable	moderate	inaccurate	poor
worthless	adequate	positive	certain

POSITIVE AND PASSIVE CHARACTER TRAITS

Positive or Dynamic Qualities	Passive or Detractive Qualities
versatile	quiet
self-confident	patient
positive	steady
intuitive	reserved
abrupt	hesitant
observant	painstaking
mentally alert	careful
original	lenient
brusque	taciturn
talkative	studious
optimistic	dull
vain	pessimistic
firm	cautious
energetic	unresponsive
opinionated	lethargic
resourceful	weak
well balanced	pliable
outspoken	sober
poised	conventional
prejudiced	conservative
argumentative	tactful
bold	orthodox
ingenious	unassuming
impatient	timid
unorthodox	courteous
restless	inactive
nervous	calm
proud	passive

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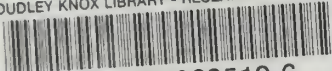Super, Donald E. Appraising Vocational Fitness. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949. 727 pp.

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